

From the History and Preservation Section of the New Jersey Library Association

Volume 8, No. I Winter 2005

H/P Section Conference Programs

This year's NJLA Conference takes place on April 11-13 at the Ocean Place Resort and Spa in Long Branch, NJ. The History and Preservation Section is sponsoring the following programs:

Tuesday, April 12, 2005 4:30 - 5:20 pm History of the MLS in NJ Pat Reeling, Rutgers University, SCILS Co-sponsored by Rutgers Alumni Association Come celebrate 50 years of the MLS at SCILS!

Wednesday, April 13, 2005 2:30 - 3:20 pm Writing the History of New Jersey Raymond Frey, Centenary College

Wednesday, April 13, 2005 3:30 - 4:20 pm Irish in New Jersey Dermot Quinn, Seton Hall University

Dr. Quinn's book *The Irish in New Jersey: Four Centuries of American* is a recent publication from Rutgers University Press. In this thought-provoking and richly illustrated history, Dermot Quinn calls upon a remarkable treasury of photographs and newspaper clippings that uncover the story of how the Irish in New Jersey maintained their cultural roots while also embracing their role in laying the foundations for the social, economic, political, and religious landscapes of the country they now called home. Dr. Quinn is an Associate Professor in the History Department at Seton Hall University.

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Seton Hall University celebrates sesquicentennial

The official start of the Seton Hall University Sesquicentennial to commemorate the founding of the school in 1856 began on November 6th, 2004 with a celebratory gala which served as a prelude to other special events over the course of this multi-year celebration. A number of artifacts and display materials were provided by the Archives & Special Collections Center for this event along with a ceremony renaming the school's Recreation Center in honor of the late Richie Regan, a legendary figure in the development of Basketball and Athletic competition on campus. The Archives & Special Collections Center will also play an integral part in all aspects of this commemoration as this office will be involved with all activities devoted to the History & Heritage of Setonia over the next few years.

For more information about the Seton Hall Sesquicentennial you can contact University Archivist/Committee Chair Alan Delozier by phone at: (973) 275-2378, or via e-mail at: delozial@shu.edu

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Letter from the President

Happy New Year to all members and friends of the NJLA History & Preservation Section! With 2005 now upon us and our revised Bylaws and Constitution in place, the focus of our activities has a more official resonance as a result. We are also making great strides within the state historical community and related enterprises alike. For example, the upcoming annual NJLA Conference will provide an opportunity for showcasing top notch speakers including Raymond Frey and Dermot Quinn along with a celebration of the Rutgers University SCILS program which has spawned many members of the History & Preservation body and the library community at large. In addition, our new Executive Board will be announced soon, and more development on the leadership front will be forthcoming as the 2005-2006 semester fast approaches.

Along with group excellence, individual recognition has come in the form of various comments, initiatives and awards in regard to

our activities. The meeting minutes of April Kane, the conference planning of Nancy Madacsi, the work of Lawrence Greene and Jane Hylicke especially in regard to her efforts in coordinating our last meeting at the Somerset County Library and Newsletter Editorship of Joanne Parra are prominent among the fine work being done by our membership. Our Past-President, Joe Da Rold was further recognized for his excellence in historical circles and became the recent recipient of a recent New Jersey Historical Commission award of merit.

Counted among the additional objectives we hope to achieve prior to the end of this year include an increased presence on the Internet and connecting to our membership in a more direct and visible manner. The creation of a section history which will lay the foundation for future generations to build upon along with an organized archival scheme for our Section activities will make for a lasting legacy in our field of expertise. Promotional literature and other means of outreach will also be

a part of our mission as we strive to keep experts, faithful friends and newcomers to the field in mind when it comes to our activities and how to expand our base of operations.

The value of history whether it be primary archival resource, written scholarship, inspiring architecture, vintage photographs, motion pictures or an oral history transcription, the preservation of our invaluable research materials is a perpetual concern of our group. This is where academic, public and special libraries continue to provide an important service to the community at large. A journey of discovery to your local library and a show of support for their respective historical collections will help keep the tradition of your town, institution and community alive and well. For yesterday, today and tomorrow our state history is a precious thing which should be saved and celebrated for the ages. A resounding cheer from here for New Jersey History!

Alan Delozier President

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Congratulations to...

Joe Da Rold, Director, Plainfield Public Library on his well-deserved award of recognition from the New Jersey Historical Commission for his outstanding work with local history collections. Congratulations Joe!

New MARAC Directory

MARAC will be sending out its Membership Directory this month, and will be using a new format to produce and distribute the directory. The directory will be produced as a .pdf file and sent to all members as an e-mail attachment. If MARAC does not have your e-mail address on file, a copy of the directory will be printed and mailed to you. The directory will be updated and resent to all members via the same format in July.

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Read any good books lately?

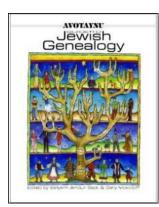
By Christine Jochem Morristown and Morris Township Library

Because I am frequently asked by other librarians what genealogical material would be valuable to add to their collections, in this issue of *The Chronicle* I will review two books on genealogy along with two on New Jersey history.

Swan, James, *The Librarian's Guide to Genealogical Services and Research*, New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., C 2004, ISBN 1-55570-491-3, \$75.00.

Author James Swan and I have something in common: we both learned genealogical reference service in a "sink or swim" experience. My greatest fear the first six months on the job was being left alone at the reference desk on busy Saturday afternoons. Now that I'm head of a local history and genealogy department, I try to help new employees avoid repeating this scenario. One of the best tools for this is Swan's book, *The Librarian's Guide to Genealogical Services and Research*.

The Librarian's Guide covers beginning genealogical research through working with professional genealogists. It even addresses funding for genealogical collections and preserving collection material. But the section I find most useful is Part III: Tool kits. This section provides a standard bibliography of 'must-haves,' useful forms (such as research checklists, family group sheets and pedigree charts, and census worksheets), where to write for information and how to draft a successful request letter, web or database sources, and a directory of libraries and archives with the best genealogical collections across the country. This is one of the most useful books I have found to assist librarians serving genealogists and family historians. We keep it on our ready reference shelf.



Sack, Sallyann Amdur, and Gary Mokotoff, ed., *Avotaynu Guide to Jewish Genealogy*, Bergenfield, NJ: Avotaynu, Inc., C 2004, ISBN 1-886223-17-3, \$85.00.

Most people are aware of the religious significance genealogy holds for members of the Church of Latter-day Saints. Mormons believe that life does not end at

death, that families can make a covenant that unites them for eternity. Members of the Church also believe that their deceased ancestors can receive the blessings of being eternally united with their families. But to do this, members must first identify them. This is why the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has gathered genealogical records from all over the world. Less well known outside the Jewish faith, but equally as important as Mormon genealogy, is the Jewish tradition of knowing your family, your place in the community. As genealogists, Jews perform many mitzvahs: they reach out and honor the elderly, they ask questions, they visit cemeteries to honor the dead, and they perform the mitzvah of remembering. Knowing this has helped me understand the labor of love that has driven Sallyann Sack and Gary Mokotoff to collaborate on Jewish genealogical projects since 1984. The fruit of one of their latest projects is the *Avotaynu* Guide to Jewish Genealogy ('Avotaynu' means 'our fathers'). This 600+ page tome discusses everything from the spiritual aspects of Jewish genealogy to writing your family history. It includes information useful to beginning your genealogy (information that would be useful to any aspiring genealogist), as well as explanations of Jewish name practices, Holocaust research, migration patterns, and a list of the best research centers for Jewish genealogical research. If your library can afford only one book on Jewish genealogy, this is the one you should buy.

Martin, Ernestine L, *Saturday's Child*, Chapel Hill, NC: Chapel Hill Press, Inc., C 2004, ISBN 1-880849-67-4, \$26.99

This book is a memoir of two families, the author's family in New Jersey, and her husband's family in North Carolina., but what has endeared this book to us is the author's account of growing up in Morristown in the early years of the 20th century. Martin reminisces about the everyday activities of middle-class children such as skating on Speedwell Lake, attending the local public schools, and graduation ceremonies at the Community Theatre. But she also provides accounts of some of Morristown's distinctive characters: the hobos and tramps that drifted through town on the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western railroad line, or the gypsies who returned to their campground on Lake Road in Morris Township each spring. Saturday's Child is a fun read and it gives a first-hand account of what it was like to grow up in Morristown, NJ, in the first half of the 20th century.

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Plainfield history collections available online

Joe Da Rold Plainfield Public Library

I am excited to announce that our Plainfield history collections are at last searchable online. The following address will take you to our home page: http://www.plainfieldlibrary.info. Once there, click on "Search" in the Local History Collections box on the lower left. You can also use the following url to go directly to the search page: http://collections.plainfieldlibrary.info/collections browser/

During 2004, digitized images of about half of our 15,000 set blueprint collection finally became searchable online. Microfilming continued right up to the end of the year, so many sets of blueprints are still to be uploaded.

For 2005, our postcard and photograph collections of Plainfield images have just been made available to the public. This is the result of our three-year federal IMLS grant, grants through the NJ Historical Commission, and the Union County History grant program. All of our 1,000 unique postcard images are searchable, while we will continue to print, index and scan photographs for years to come as grants become available.



Because of the above funding, the strength of our site is our local history collections, but upgrades are planned for all of the subpages listed in the navigation bar. Improvements and new features are being made weekly. For instance, the postcard image will change each time you enter our homepage or refresh the page, but for now only 13 images are rotating. Other refinements and enhancements will be appearing in the near future, including links to images of our art collection, improvements to the database search strategy, and web-based exhibits.

Our recent upgrades reflect suggestions by three user group evaluation sessions (about 40 people), including one group of high school students. We would be pleased to hear from you as well. Your comments about navigation or search difficulties may coincide with features already under development or issues we have overlooked.

Continued from page 3

Kelly, Deborah Marquis, and Ellen Freedman Schultz, *Women's Place in New Jersey History*, Crosswicks, NJ: Preservation Partners, C 2004, ISBN 0-9763887-0-7.

Planning a family outing or 'busman's holiday'? As part of the New Jersey History Women's Heritage Trail Project, Preservation Partners Deborah Kelly and Ellen Schultz have identified and documented historic sites significant because of their connection with New Jersey women. That survey and the context study formed the basis for *Women's Place in New Jersey History*.

In *Women's Place*, the authors provide an overview of New Jersey women's history and group the related sites for their significance in the social, cultural, educational and religious work accomplished by new Jersey women from the colonial period through post-WWII. The book also lists sites open to the public, a bibliography and list of resources, and lesson plans for further discussion, whether in the classroom or just around the dinner table with your own brood.